

# **CHINESE BUDDHIST PILGRIMS IN INDIA**

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## CHINESE BUDDHIST PILGRIMS IN INDIA.

BY N. M. BILLIMORIA.

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The knowledge of Northern Buddhism is due to the discovery of the Buddhist literature of China. This literature contains the records of the travels of various Chinese Buddhist pilgrims who visited India in the early centuries of the Christian era. The evidence of these records is entirely trustworthy; they refer to the geography, history, manners and religion of the people of India; one particular point of interest is the evident sincerity and enthusiasm of the travellers themselves. Prof. Samuel Beal writes in "Buddhist Records of the Western World" never did more devoted pilgrims leave their native country to encounter the perils of travel in foreign and distant lands; never did disciples more ardently desire to gaze on the sacred vestiges of their religion; never did men endure greater sufferings by desert, mountain, and seas than these simple-minded earnest Buddhist priests. And that such courage, religious devotion, and power of endurance should be exhibited by men so sluggish, as we think, in their very nature as the Chinese, this is very surprising, and may perhaps arouse some consideration."

Buddhist books began to be imported into China during the end of first century A.D. One of the writers of these Buddhist records, I-tsing, (671-695) writes that some 500 years before his time, twenty men, or about that number, had found their way through the province of Sz'chuen to the Mahabodhi tree in India and for them and their fellow countrymen a Maharaja called Srigupta built a temple. The establishment was called the "Tchina Temple." In I-tsing's time it was in ruins. I-tsing died in A.D. 713, at the age of 79. He was a pilgrim of no small distinction. His work "A Record of the Buddhist Religion" as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago (671-695, A.D.) has been translated by Dr. J. Takakusu, in the Oxford Clarendon Press. This book is invaluable for the history of Buddhism and Sanskrit literature, contributes little to the materials for political history. In A.D. 290 a Chinese pilgrim Chu Si-hing visited Khotan; another called Fa-ling shortly afterwards visited North India; and many more must have followed their example. Several stone tablets with Chinese inscriptions at Buddha Gaya were found on which we find the names of pilgrims Chi-I and Ho-yun, in company with several other priests.

The first Chinese traveller whose name and writings have come down to us is the Sakyaputra Fa-hian. It was a custom among the Chinese meditant priests who adopted the Buddhist faith, to change their names at the time when they left their home; they assumed the title of Sakyyaputras, sons or mendicants of Sakya; so we find amongst the inscriptions at Mathura the title Sakya Bhikshunyaka or Sakya Bhikshor added to the religious names of the different benefactors there mentioned. The

original name of pilgrim Fa-hian was Kung. He left his home in China in A.D. 699 and after an absence of 14 years returned to Nankin; he died at the age of 86. After a long travel Fa-hian came to a place by Marco Polo called Che-chten; Fa-hian writes that Buddhism prevailed in this country and there were about 4,000 priests. The country was rugged and barren; Marco Polo says "the whole of this Province is sandy, but there are numerous towns and villages." Then he came to Khotan; and after staying there for a time he began his journey towards India; the pilgrims reached the country of To-li the valley of Darail in the Dard country; this valley is on the western bank of the Indus; still advancing south-west for 15 days, they strike the Indus or probably the Swat river; crossing which they enter on the kingdom of Udyana, where they found Buddhism in a flourishing condition.

The Udyana country is described as highly irrigated and very fertile; Swat is second only to the famous valley of Kashmir. Udyana would have embraced the four modern districts of Panjkora, Bijawar, Swat and Bunir. Fa-Hian mentions Su-ao-tu as a small district to the south of Udyana. This has generally been identified with Swat; but from its position to the south of Udyana, and to the north of Peshawar it cannot be the large valley of the river Swat, but must have been limited to the smaller valley of Bunir. The legend told by Fa-Hian confirms this—the legend of the hawk and the pigeon, in which Buddha to save the pigeon, tears his own flesh and offers it to the hawk. The capital of Udyana was called Mangala. At about 42 miles to the north-east of the capital the pilgrim reached the source of the Swat river; and 125 miles further in the same direction, after crossing a mountain range and ascending the Indus, he arrived at Darel, which was the ancient capital of Udyana. As said above Darel is a valley on the right or western bank of the Indus, now occupied by the Dards. Fa-Hian calls it To-li, and makes it a separate kingdom. The Dards are now divided into three separate tribes, according to the dialects they speak. Those who use the Arniya dialect occupy the N.-W. districts of Yasan and Chitral; those who speak the Khajunah dialect occupy the N.E. district of Hunza and Nager; and those who speak the Shina dialect occupy the valleys of Gilgit, Chillas, Darel, Kohli and Palas, along the banks of the Indus. In this district there was a celebrated wooden statue of the future Buddha Maïtreya, which is mentioned by both the pilgrims, Fa-Hian and Hwen Tshang. According to the first pilgrim it was erected about B.C. 243, that is in the reign of Asoka, when the Buddhist religion was actively disseminated over India by missionaries. Hwen Tshang describes the statue as 100 feet in height.

#### SUNG YUN. A.D. 518.

This pilgrim was a native of Little Tibet. He was sent in A.D. 518 by the Empress of the Northern Wei Dynasty, in company with other Bhikshu, to the western countries to search for books. They brought together back 170 volumes or sets of the Great Development series. They

seem to have taken the southern route to Khotan and thence by the same route as Fa-Hian and his companions. The Ye-tha were in possession of the old country of the Yue-chi and had recently conquered Gandhara. The Ye-tha were a rude horde of Turks; they were in fact the Ephthalites or Huns of the Byzantine writers. In the early part of the sixth century, their power extended over western India and Cosmas tells us of their King Gollas who domineered there with a 1,000 elephants and a vast force of horsemen. According to Sung-Yun, the Ye-tha had conquered or received tribute from more than 40 countries in all, from the present Tirhut in the south of Malwa in the north, eastward to Khotan, westward to Persia. This invasion of India can be placed about A. D. 460. The country of Gandahara lies along the Kabul river between the Kunar and the Indus, comprising the districts of Peshawar and Rawalpindi in the northern Punjab. Its capitals were Peshawar and Taxila. In the Behistun inscription inscribed by order of King Darius of Persia, in the 5th year of his reign, in 516 B.C. Gadara or Gandhara is mentioned among the conquered countries of Darius.

Asoka sent here a Buddhist missionary named Majjhantika in 245 B.C. Gandhara was included in the kingdom of Chandra Gupta and Asoka. and it seems that Agathocles conquered the country and expelled the Mauryas. According to Col. Rawlinson, the Gandarians of the Indus seem to have been emigrated to Kandahar in the 5th century A.D.

Sun-Yun after reaching so far as Peshawar and Nagarahara returned to China in A.D. 521.

Nagarahra is the modern Jalalabad. The natural boundaries of the district are the Jagdalak Pass on the west, and the Khaibar Pass on the east, with the Kabul river to the north, and the Safed Koh or snowy mountains to the south. The position of the capital would appear to have been at Begram about 2 miles to the west of Jalalabad, and 5 or 6 miles to the W. N. W. of Hidda, the Hi-lo of the Chinese pilgrims. Hidda is a small village 5 miles to the south of Jalalabad; well known for its large collection of Buddhist stupas tumuli, and caves, which were explored by Masson. He describes the capital as literally covered with tumuli and mounds, adds these are truly sepulchral monuments but with the topos sanction the inference that a very considerable city existed here, or that it was a place of renown for sanctity. It may have been both." It is possible Hidda may be only a transposition of Hadda, a bone, as a stupa of the skull-bone of Buddha is said in one passage to have been in the town of Hilo, while in another passage it is located in the town of Fo-ting-koching, which is only a Chinese translation of "Buddha's skull-bone town." In the beginning of the 5th century it is simply called Na-kie or Nagara by Fa Hian, who adds that it was then an independent State governed by its own king. In A.D. 630 at the time of Hwen Thsang's visit, it was without a king and subject to Kapisene—that is the whole of Kafristan.

as well as the two large valleys of Ghorband and Panjshir. After this it became successively a part of Brahman kingdom of Kabul and of the Mahomedan empire of Gazni.

Fa-Hian leaving home, was six years in arriving at Mid-India; he resided there six years and was three years more before he returned to his native place. He had successively passed through thirty different countries.

I-tsing, who died in A.D. 713 at the age of 79, was himself a pilgrim of no small distinction. His interesting work, "A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malaya Archipelago (671-695 A.D.)" has been translated and published in the Oxford Clarendon Press in 1896. This book while invaluable for the history of Buddhism and Sanskrit literature contributes little to the materials for political history.

In 670 A.D. I-tsing was in China and made an agreement with a few friends to go to India together.

In A.D. 671 he left China, and after 29 days sail he was in Bhoga where he stayed for six months learning Sanskrit.

In A.D. 672 he started on a ship by the King's help for Malaya, which then had become a part of Sribhoga, and reached there, and stayed two months.

He started again for Kaka, and reached there after 15 days; he remained there and started for India on a king's ship. After ten days sail towards the north he came to the country of the Naked People; and after a month's sail north east, he reached Tamralipti, in Eastern India, some distance from Nalanda.

In A.D. 673 he stayed for some time at Tamralipti, and started for Central India with a cavern. He took his way in the westerly direction. At a place ten days' distance from Mahabodhi, he passed a great mountain and bogs; and was attacked by robbers. After this he turned north; after a few days he came for the first time to the Nalanda monastery, and made a pilgrimage to the Vulture Rock, Buddhagaya, Vaisali, Kusinagara, Kapilavastu, Sravasti, the Deer Park and the Cock Mountain. He stayed for ten years in the Nalanda monastery.

In A.D. 685 thirteen years after his arrival in India, he was a place some miles west of Nalanda. He collected the Buddhist books Tripitaka amounting to 500,000 slokas, and came back to Tamralipti; on the way again he was attacked by robbers. About A.D. 688 he was on his way back; he passed Kaka and returned to Bhooga. Though he himself was not willing to go, he was taken back to Kwang-tung in 689. After a time he again went to Bhoga. In A.D. 692 he sent home his Re-

cords, Memoirs, and other books. In 695 he came back to Si-king and was favourably received by the ruling queen; the usurper.

I will give some particulars about the geographical names. Sribhoga was a very flourishing country in the time of I-tsing, who went there twice and stayed some 7 years (688-695) studying and translating the original texts, either Sanskrit or Pali. He uses the Bhoga or Sribhoga indiscriminately. The capital of the country was called Bhoḡa, probably a colony of Java; when the kingdom became great and extended as far as Malayu, the whole country received the name of Sribhoga. Bhoga the capital was on the river Bhoga, and it was the first trading port with China, a regular navigation between it and Kwang-tung was conducted by a Persian merchant. When the wind was favourable the distance between these two ports was about 20 days, or some times a month. The king of Bhoga had ships of his own probably for commerce sailing between India and Bhoga; the king and the people favoured Buddhism. It was a centre of Buddhist learning in the islands of the Southern Sea and there were more than a thousand priests. Gold seems to have been abundant. I-tsing once called Sribhoga "Gold Isle." People used to offer the Budha a lotus-flower of gold; they used golden jars and had images of gold. In the country of Sribhoga in the middle of the eighth month and in middle of spring (second month) the dial casts no shadow and a man standing has no shadow at noon. The sun passes just above the head twice a year.

#### THE COUNTRY OF THE NAKED PEOPLE.

I-tsing passed this island when he sailed for India; it points to one of the smaller Nicobar Islands. The group is believed to be the Lankabalus or Lankhabalus of the Arab navigators in the 9th century, who wrote as follows: "These islands support a numerous population. Both men and women go naked, only the women wear a girdle of the leaves of trees. When a ship passes near, the men come out in boats of various sizes and barter ambergris and cocoa-nuts for iron." The description of Marco Polo in the 13th century does not agree so well as the above. He says: "When you leave the island of Java (Java the less=Sumatra) and the kingdom of Lambri, you sail north about 150 miles and then you come to two islands one of which is called "Necuvanan" (or Necuran). In this island they have no king or chief but live like beasts; and I tell you they all go naked, both men and women, and do not use the slightest covering of any kind. They are idolaters; there are all sorts of fine and valuable trees such as red sanders and Indian nuts and cloves and brazil and sundry other good spices." The group of the Nicobar Islands was called the "Land of Rakshasa" in the history of T'an (618-906).

#### TAMRALIPTI.

Tamralipti is Tamluk, which was formerly on the mouth of the Ganges is now situated on the western bank of Rupnarayana, in the district of Midnapur in Bengal. In the 6th century A.D. it was the capital of the

ancient kingdom of Sumha, and it formed a part of the Magadha kingdom under the Mauryas. It was celebrated as a maritime port and an emporium of commerce from the 4th to the 12th century; the sea has now receded south to a distance of 60 miles. I-tsing resided at in a celebrated monastery called Baraha monastery.

#### NALANDA.

Nalanda is Bargaon, 7 miles to the N.W. of Rajgir in the district of Patna, the celebrated seat of Buddhist learning upto the 13th century A.D. It was the birth-place of Sariputra, the famous disciple of Budha, it is said he also died there. Many Chinese pilgrims including Hieun Tsiang and I-tsing studied at this monastery in the 7th century. According to Hieun-Tsiang, ten thousand priests, and according to I-tsing 3 thousand priests resided in the six large buildings within the same compound, forming together one great monastic establishment. Both the Chinese pilgrims mentioned above resided and studied at the Nalanda monastery for many years. Bargaon contains a temple of the Sun and a beautiful Saravak temple of Mahavir of the Jainas. Mahavira passed here 14 rainy season retirements. In the latter part of the seventh century when I-tsing resided at Nalanda there were more than ten great tanks near the Nalanda monastery where at the sound of the ghanta, bell, hundred and sometimes thousand priests used to bathe together. During the Buddhist period there were six Universities, *viz.* at Nalanda (Bargaon); Vikaramasila (Patharghata); Taxila; Balabhi (Wala); Dhanakataka (Amravati) and Kanchipura (Conjeveram). The first two were in Eastern India, and the rest in North, Western, Central and Southern India respectively. It also appears that there was a University at Padmapura in Vidarbha in the 7th century A.D. The Universities of Ujjayini, Taxila, and Benares were Brahmanical. The University of Nalanda was founded in succession to the Taxila University in the first century B.C. and existed nominally upto the 12th century A.D. when it was destroyed by the Muhammadans under Bakhtiyar Khilji.

I find from the Rajatarangini, the Saga of the Kings of Kashmir that there was relation between Kashmir and China. Lalitaditya, called also Muktapida, king of Kashmir, reigned from 700 to 736 A.D. The Annals of the T'ang dynasty of China record the arrival of an embassy from Mo-tu-pi king of Kashmir during the reign of the Emperor Hiuent-sung (713-755 A.D.) But the date of the embassy is not mentioned by the Chinese. Mo-tu-pi is believed to be Muktapida which was another name for Lalitaditya. The Kashmiri king according to the Chinese chronicler, asked for an alliance against Tibet and for a Chinese army of 200,000, to be encamped in Kashmir on the bank of the Valur lake. As the embassy is recorded to have arrived after the successful Chinese expedition to Baltistan which took place between the years 736-747 the date of Lalitaditya given by Kalhan would be wrong if we are to accept the identification of names as suggested by European scholars. A possible explanation might be that Kahana's date is correct and the Chinese recorded the date of Muktapida, which must have been well known to them, as a generic name for the kings of Kashmir.



In the annals of the T'angs there was Wu Tse-T'ien, the proto-type of Queen Didda of China. She was guilty of many acts of cruelty. Piety went hand in hand with her sudden bursts of cruelty and lust. It was she who from 672 to 675 A.D. caused to be sculptured in the grottos of Lungmen the celebrated Great Buddha of the Rocks with his company of Bodhisattvas, monks and Lokapalas. Lamghan is only a small tract of country, lying along the north bank of the Kabul river, bounded on the west and east by the Alingar and Kunar rivers and on the north by the snowy mountains. The square tract is very nearly a square of 40 miles on each side; it had formerly been a separate kingdom; but in the 7th century the royal family was extinct and the district was a dependency of Kapisa.

The first Chinese expedition against Baltistan (little Tibet) occurred between the years 736-747 and it is not unlikely that Lalitaditya perished while opposing a Chinese army in the north of Kashmir.

The learned mathematician and astronomer, Alberuni, almost the only scholar who has ever taken the trouble to learn Sanscrit entered India in the train of Mahomed of Ghazni. His work, descriptive of India, called *Tahkik-i-Hind*, was completed in 1031 A.D. He states that the descendants of Kaniska ruled for centuries in Kabul. The last king of this race was Laga turman and his vazir was Kallar a Brahman. This vazir found some hidden treasure, and his riches enabled him to carry out his plans and he occupied the royal throne.

Alberuni further adds that when the Arabs advancing from Persia conquered Balkh, Bamiyan and Kabul, in A.D. 870-871, they found a king in Kabul of the Turkish Shahiya dynasty whom they called Kabul Shah and whom they described as a Turk by race and Buddhist by religion. Lalliya the minister of that king was the founder of a line of famous kings known as the Sahis of Ohind, the ruins of which place exist 15 miles from Attock on the west bank of the Indus. Bulkhand and Bamiyan were then great centres of Buddhism and Indian culture and were situated on the highway connecting India with Persia and China. When the Arab storm burst in Central Asia the monasteries and shrines were destroyed and the people converted to Islam. Early in the 10th century the descendant of Saman a Persian chief who had become Mahomedan extended their dominion over Transoxiana, Persia and part of Afghanistan, but their power was usurped by the Turkish slaves to whom they had entrusted the principal offices of state. One of the Turkish slaves Alptigin rebelled and founded a separate principality in Gazni. He was succeeded by his slave Balkatgin. Another slave of Alptigin, Sabaktigin subsequently ascended the throne of Gazni in 977 A.D. and he conquered Kabul and the adjoining territory including Lamghan (Lampaka) in 988 A.D. from the Sahi king Jayapala. During the rule of the Sahis a Chinese pilgrim named Ki-ye with 300 monks reached Gandhara via the Gilgit valley from his home Kansu in north-west China which he had left in 960 A.D. Despite the life and death struggle with the Turks of Ghazul, Anandapal son of Jayapala encouraged learning and even his

enemies have paid him a tribute for his chivalry and skill in the arts of peace and war. Anandapala's son Triconapala was the last of the Sahis whose final stand against Mahmud on the bank of the Tausi river to the south of Kashmir is described in the Rajaratnagiri. The Sahis had already lost Lampaka (Lamghan) and Nagarahara (Jalalabad) in Afghanistan. After this battle of Olind the road to the invasion of India lay open before Mahmud. Alberuni the contemporary historian writes: "The Hindu Shahiya dynasty is now extinct and of the whole house there is no longer the slightest remnant in existence. We must say that in all their grandeur they never slackened in their ardent desire for doing that which is good and right, and that they were men of noble sentiments and noble bearing."

### HIUEN TSANG—YUAN-CHUANG.

Hiuen Tsang—Yuan-Chuang. This illustrious prince of pilgrims deserves more particular notice, as his fame as master of the Law resounds through all Buddhist lands. His travels extended from 629 to 646 A.D. and covered an enormous area, including almost every portion of India, except the extreme south. Vincent A. Smith in his early History of India writes: "His book is a treasure house of accurate information, indispensable to every student of Indian antiquity, and has done more than any archaeological discovery to render possible the remarkable resuscitation of lost Indian history which has recently been effected. Although the chief historical value of Hiuen Tsang's work consists in its contemporary description of political and social institutions, the pilgrim has increased the debt of gratitude due to his memory by recording a considerable mass of ancient tradition, which would have been lost but for the care to preserve it."

Yuan-chuang was the youngest of four sons. He did not like to remain in China for he longed vehemently to visit the holy land of his religion, to see his far-famed shrines, and all the visible evidence of the Buddha's ministrations. He had learned moreover to be dissatisfied with the Chinese translations of the sacred books and he was desirous to procure these books in their original language, and to learn the true meaning of their abstruse doctrine from the Pandits of India. He left the capital in 629 and set out secretly on his long pilgrimage. After 16 years absence Yuan-chuang returned to China and arrived at Chang-an in the beginning of 645. I quote from Watters Life of the Pilgrim; "And never in the history of China did Buddhist monk receive such a joyous ovation as that with which our pilgrim was welcomed. The Emperor and his court, the officials and merchants and all the people made holiday. The streets were crowded with eager men and women who expressed their joy by gay banners and festive music." Now he was safely back to his native land and with a great quantity of precious treasures. There were 657 sacred books of Buddhism, some of them were full of mystical charms able to put to flight the invisible powers of mischief. All these books were in strange Indian language and writing, and were made of trimmed leaves of palm or of birch-bark strung together in layers. Then

there were lovely images of the Buddha and his saints in gold, and silver, and crystal and sandalwood. There were also many curious pictures and above all, 150 relics, true relics of the Buddha. All these relics were carried on 20 horses escorted into the city with great pomp and ceremony.

Sir Alexander Cunningham in his *Ancient Geography* gives a Chronology of the Pilgrim's travels. It will be better to explain Hieuni Tsang's actual route. After leaving the Iron Gates, Kalgha, mountain pass about 90 miles S. S. E. of Samarkand) and entering Tukhara he proceeded across the Oxus to Kundux on the eastern bank of Surkh-ab. Thence he went to Balk; here he remained examining the sacred relics of his religion; he marched southwards to Bamiyan. So that of all the countries named betwixt the Oxus and the Hindu Kush, our Pilgrim himself visited only Kunduz, Balkh, Gaz and Baniyan. Leaving Balkh he travels south about 20 miles to Gaz. Ibn Haukal also states that the hill country south of Bialkh is called Gaz.

There are rock-cut figures of Buddha in Bamiyan which have been objects of curiosity down to the present day. On the opposite site of the valley from the great standing figure about a mile to the west a stony gully leads into the hills. A short way up this there is a nearly insulated rock on the flat summit of which there is in relief a recumbent figure, bearing a rude resemblance to a huge lizard. Hyde says the two larger statues are 50 cubits high one called Surh-but (grey image) and the other Khank-but (grey image). Burnes's estimate is 120 and 70 feet. To the east of the convent there is a standing figure of Sakya Buddha made of metallic stone in height 100 feet.

As stated above Hiuen Tsang had covered an enormous area, including almost every part of India, except the extreme south. Let us see what he has to say about Western India and Sindh. According to the Pilgrim Western India was divided into three great states, Sindh, Gurjjara and Balabhi. The first comprised the whole valley of the Indus from the Punjab to the sea, including the Delta and the island of Kachh; the second comprised Western Rajputana and the Indian Desert; and the third comprised the peninsula of Gujarat with a small portion of the adjacent coast. In the 7th century Sindh was divided into four principalities, *viz.* Upper Sindh, Middle Sindh, Lower Sindh and Kachh. The whole formed one kingdom under the Raja of Upper Sindh, who at the time of Hwen Thsang's visit in A.D. 641 was a Sudra. In the 7th century the capital of the province the Pilgrim called Pi-chen-po-pu-lo, which M. Julien transcribes as Vachva-pura. M. Vivien de St. Martin suggests Vichalapura or city of middle Sindh.

We know that Alor was the capital of Sindh both before and after the period of Hwen Thsang's visit. Cunningham in his *Ancient Geography* states Alor may be the Binagara of Ptolemy—it is only a variant reading of the Chinese form, as pulo or pura is the same as nagara, and Pinchenpo may be the full form of the initial syllable Bi.

About Sindh, the narrative in the Records proceeds to state that the pilgrim went back from Mahesvarapura to Guchala and from that proceeded north again through a wild rugged region for 1900 li and crossing the Sinta (Sindh) river reached the country with the same name. Mahesvarapura is the present Madala, on the right bank of the Nerbuda, 40 miles to the south of Indore. Li is one-sixth of a mile. The pilgrim describes Sindh as being above 7000 li in circuit and its capital, Pi-shan-po-pu-lo by name, as above 30 li in circuit. The products of the country were early wheat, gold, silver, and native copper and it had oxen and sheep and dromedaries and mules; it yielded also various kinds of salt, red, white and black, and a white rock-salt; the people of various countries used the salt as medicine. The inhabitants were quick-tempered but upright, quarrelsome and vituperative and of superficial learning; they were thorough believers in Buddhism. There were several hundreds of monasteries and above 10,000 Brethren all of the Hinayanist Sammatiya school. Most of these were indolent worthless persons; of the superior Brethren who, leading lives of lonely seclusion, never relaxed in perseverance, many attained arhatship. There were about 30 Deva-Temples and the various sectaries lived pell-mell. The king who was of the Sudra caste was a sincere man and a believer in Buddhism. The Buddha while in this world had travelled in this country and Asoka had erected some tens of topes as memorials of his visit; there were also monasteries or topes erected where the great arhat Upagupta, who often visited the country, had preached and taught. Among the low marshes near the Sinta (Sindh Indus) for above 1,000 li were settled some myriads of families of ferocious disposition, who made the taking of life their occupation, and supported themselves by rearing cattle; they had no social distinctions and no government; they shaved of their hair and wore the bhikshu garb, looking like bhikshus, yet living in the world; they were bigoted in their narrow views and reviled the "Great Vehicle." According to local accounts the ancestors of these people were originally cruel and wicked and were converted by a compassionate arhat who received them into the Buddhist communion; they thereupon ceased to take life, shaved their heads and assumed the dress of Buddhist mendicants; in the course of time, however, the descendants of these men had gone back to their old ways, but they still remained outwardly bhikshus.

From the above we find that the pilgrim went back from Mahesvara to Guchla, and continued his journey thence north to Sindh. Julien suggests Vichavapura as possibly the original for the name of the capital here transcribed Pi-ahan-po-pulo, and other restorations have been proposed but no one seems to be perfectly satisfactory. The name given in the text may have been a book name, and not current among the people at the time. As stated above Cunningham takes it to be another name for Alor, the capital of Upper Sindh about this period. General Haig in his "The Indus Delta Country" writes: Hiuen Tsang's Sindh, in fact, is not the Sindh of any period known to history, and his description of it is wholly irreconcilable with the facts which we gather from

the contemporary history embodied in the "Tarikh Hind wa Sind." "He thinks that Julien's Sin-tu country must have included the Salt Range, and that its capital must be looked for somewhere in the Derajat. According to I-ching Sindh and Lata were in West India, Sindh lay between Kapis and Lata. I may state that Kapisa is Kushan, the country to the north of the Kabul river, the Kipin of the Chinese travellers. According to Sir R. Bhandarkar, Kapisa was north Afghanistan—the country to the north of the Kabul river. The town of Kapisa was once the capital of Gandhara. LATA is Southern Gujarat including Khandesh situated between the river Mahi and the lower Tapti. According to Yule, Lada was the ancient name of Gujarat and Northern Konkan.

As to the strange inhabitants in the lowlands along the Indus, another Chinese Buddhist pilgrim places the tribe on the side of the Black River and makes the people to have been sheep-rearers; it adds that all of them male and female shave off their hair, wore monk's garb and were outwardly bhikshus.

The Middle Sindh, or Vachlo, is described by Hwen Thsang as 417 miles in circuit. The chief city named C-fan-cha was situated 117 miles from the capital of Upper Sindh, that is Alor, and 50 miles from Pitasila, the capital of Lower Sindh. The latter is Pattala of the Greeks or Hyderabad. The position of O. fan. cha is fixed in the immediate vicinity of Brahmanabad. Hwen Thsang's kingdom of Ofancha or Avanda corresponds as nearly as possible with the province of Middle Sindh or Vichalo.

The district of Pitasila or Lower Sind is described by Hwen Thsang as being 500 miles in circuit, which agrees almost exactly with the dimensions of the Delta of the Indus from Hyderabad to the sea, including a small tract of country on both sides, extending towards the desert of Umarkot on the east and to the mountains of Cape Monz on the west. The pilgrim writes about Pitasila that the population is dense; they have no chief ruler but they depend on the country of Sintu. The soil is salt and sandy; the country is subject to cold tempestuous wind. A great quantity of beans and wheat is grown. Flower and fruit are scarce. The manners of the people are fierce and rough. Their language slightly differs from that of middle India. They do not love learning but as far as they know they have a sincere faith. There are some 50 sangharamas with about 3,000 priests; they study the Little Vehicle according to the Sammatiya school. There are 20 Deva temples frequented mostly by the heretics called Pasupatas (ascetics smeared with ashes).

To the north of the city 15 or 16 li in the middle of the great forest is a stupa several hundred feet high built by Asoka-rajā.

When the pilgrim left Avanda he proceeded east 700 li and crossing the Indus entered Sindh; from that he went back to Nalanda in Magadha (south Behar) and thence to Prayyga (Allahabad). From Prayyga



Since writing the above I have come across a paper on the "verification of the itinerary of Hwān Tshang by Alex. Cunningham Capt. Engineers, published in the Journal of The Asiatic Society of Bengal in the December 1847 number. I subjoin quotations from that article relating to Sind etc.

Sintu, Sindh, 7000 li, (1167 miles in extent. The capital is Pi-chhen-pho-pu-to (perhaps Pushpa-pura or "Flower town," a very common name for Indian cities. It appears to be the Pasipeda of Ptolemy). Asoka here built many stupas. (No distance is given, but as the city was situated on the Indus, the bearing is sufficient to indicate the town of ALOR, which we know to have been the capital of Sind, within a few years after Hwan Thsang's visit. I should prefer rendering the Chinese syllables by Viswapura; but Pushpapura appears to be more likely name, as it is a very common term for Indian cities. Thus both Kanoj and Pataliputra were also called Kusumapura, a synonym of Pushpapura, which in its Pali form of Puppha-pura, was a common name of Palibothra amongst the Buddhists.

Pi-to-shi-lo, 3000 li (500 miles) in extent. Without a king, being a dependency of Sind. To the N. of the town at 15 or 16 li (2½ miles) in a great forest is a stupa several hundred feet in height built by Asoka; and near it to the E. is a monastery built by the Arhan Ta-kia-ta-pan-na. The bearing and distance point exactly to the ruins of Nasserpur and Nerunkot, close to the present Haiderabad. The Chinese syllables perhaps represent Patasila, पतिसिला the "extensive rock" or the "expanse of stone," a name of the same import as Patala, "the extensive abode;" the common acceptance of Patala is पाताल or "Hell" in allusion to its low position in the Delta of the Indus. The Tibetans however give it a much more natural etymology. They call the town Potala, the "place of boats" or "Haven." But as Potala was also the name of a hill, Hwan Thsang's syllables may be rendered "Potasila," "the boat hill," which when applied to the rocky Nerunkot, would be as appropriate a name as Potala or "Boat-place." There can be no doubt that it is the Patala of the Greeks. Even now it stands at the real head of the Delta, at the point of divergence of the Guni river, which must have been the

eastern branch down which Alexander sailed. The determination of this point we owe chiefly to Hwan Thsang's distances.

Thence to the N. E. at 300 li (50 miles to)—

A-pan-chha. 2400 to 2500 li (400 to 417 miles) in extent. Without a king, being a dependency of Sind. Stupa built by Asoka. (Judging by the bearing and distance the place intended must be the celebrated Brahmanabad, which was rebuilt as Mansura. It is the "Brahma City" of the historians of Alexander, and the Harinatelia of Diodorus, which I believe to be derived from the Sanskrit Brahmasthala in its spoken form of Brahmasthala. The Chinese syllables would however appear to bear some resemblance to Uchha or Uch; but that town is more than 300 miles distant).

Thence to the N. E. at 900 (150 miles) to—

Fa-la-nu, 4000 li (667 miles) in extent. It is a dependency of Kia-pi-she (or Kapisa, now Kushan). The language has a slight analogy with that of central India. It is said that on the westward amongst the mountains it stretches to Ki-khiang-na. (Hwan Thsang has now crossed the frontier of Sindh, and entered the territory dependent on Kapisa or Kushan. His bearing must therefore be wrong as well as his distance; for by following them we only reach the neighbourhood of Aror, the capital of Sindh. But by comparing his further progress towards Kapisa, and by taking his distance and bearings from the place, together with the name of the district itself, it seems most probable that the country around Bolan Pass must be intended. The Chinese syllables are indeed a faithful transcript of Bolan; and although the distance is just double that recorded by Hwan Thsang, yet the fact that the pilgrim was proceeding from Sindh to Kabul almost proves the correctness of my identification, as the Bolan pass was the nearest route that he could have followed. But when joined to the absolute identity of name, I think there can scarcely be a doubt as to the correctness of the identification.

#### Verification of Hwan Thsang's view of Buddhism.

It may perhaps be urged against Hwan Thsang that as a zealous follower of Buddha, he has exhibited altogether a much too favourable view of the state of the Buddhist religion in India at the period of his visit. But fortunately we possess the independent testimonies of two different authors, the one a Brahmin, and the other a Mussalman, whose statements fully corroborate the views of the Chinese pilgrim, and vouch for truthfulness of his narrative. The Brahmin is Kalhana Pandit the author of the early portion of the Raja Taringini or Sanskrit history of Kashmir.

He gives instances from A.D. 560 to A.D. 958 when several persons had built Viharas or Buddhist monasteries, or images of Buddha.

The Mussalman author is Beladore who states that

The Indians give the name of Bodd to every object of their worship and they call an idol Bodd.

Again after the conquest of Nirun in A.D. 711 "Mahomed bin Kassim was met by some 'Samanees' (Samanas or Buddha mendicants) who came to sue for peace."

From these passages of Beladory we see that Buddha was still the chief object of worship in Sind from 60 to 70 years after HwanThsang's visit; and that Sramanas and not Brahmanas were employed by the people as mediators with the Mussalman conquerors. The statements of Kalhana are perhaps more interesting though not more decisive; for they show that Buddhism continued to be honoured by kings and ministers until the middle of the 10th century, at which time the Buddhists were persecuted by Kshema-Gupta. It is true that several of the Kashmirian erected fanes to Siva and other Brahmanical deities. But this proves no more than that Brahmanism and Buddhism were both flourishing together in Kashmir at the same time. Perhaps these princes had the same feeling upon the subject of religion as the Frenchman, immortalised by Smollet, who made his obeisance to the statue of Jupiter in St. Peter's at Rome, saying, "O, Jupiter, if ever you get the upper hand again, remember that I paid my respects to you in your adversity." Even so the Kashmirian Râjas appear to have halted between two opinions, and to have erected temples and statues of both religions, in the hope that one of the two must be right.



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